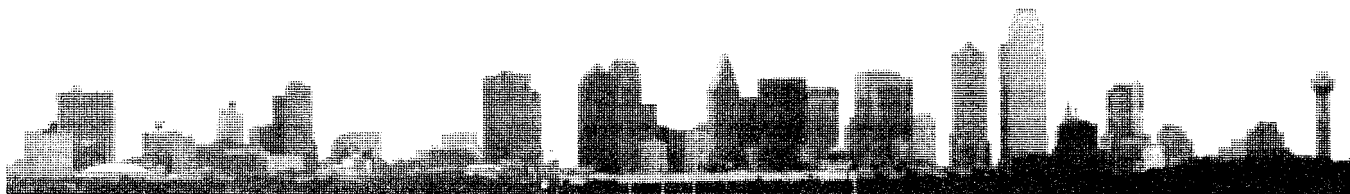


MCCC NEWS

Metroplex Commodore Computer Club



Fort Worth

Volume 11 Issue 5 — May 1993

Dallas

@ journey through time

recollections by Irv Elliott, A.M.I.G.A.

I would like to take you on a brief journey through time — not into the Twilight Zone, nor into the future, but through a past era that it was my privilege to experience. First, we must go back forty years, to a time when most people had never even heard of a computer.

It all started when I heard about a plant in St. Paul that was making some marvelous giant machines that could perform hundreds of arithmetic operations per minute. At that time, I had a year-old Chemical Engineering degree and some limited service-related experience with electronics. So, I stepped in the door of this place, Engineering Research Associates, and applied for a job.

At that time, they were working on a computer that was typical for that day. It was housed in a room about the size of a small auditorium and was about the size of two railroad box cars. A 45 horsepower fan provided cooled air that blew up into the cabinets from underneath a hollow flooring. Instead of logic cards, there were plug-in units containing hot vacuum tubes and clicking relays, with each unit about the size of a large shoe box. The units were connected at the back of the cabinets by miles of wires like a jumble of spaghetti. I had no concept of what this thing did, but I was told that it was my job, along with several other people, to write detailed instruction manuals on how to fix and operate this monster.

Memory was provided by a new device that they had developed, called a "magnetic drum." This was a large wheel about the size of an auto tire that was coated with a magnetic material, much like our modern disk drive. It only held a few thousand characters, as compared to our newer three-inch, 80 million character hard drives. The word "byte" hadn't been invented yet, and a character consisted of six "bits." Memory was measured in "words", where a word typically held six characters. There was no memory like our present day RAM.

In those days, anyone having a need for the machine

would have to create a program in numeric form using an "octal" number notation based on the digits zero through seven. A program consisted of a series of instructions each having a two-octal-digit code and a pair of octal memory addresses. All programs were entered into the machine by means of paper tape that was laboriously punched on a crude keyboard. One wrong keystroke and the tape was no good. The operator had to start the machine by means of a very short program that was laboriously poked into the machine by pressing buttons on the front panel. This program would read a short "loader" program into memory, then the loader would be executed to bring in the user's program. Because this process magically brought you up from the bottom level to a smarter level, like "lifting yourself up by your bootstraps", such a procedure became to be called "bootstrapping", or simply, "booting".

It usually required about ten sessions before a customer could get a program to run. If you were an outsider, the charge would be about \$300 per hour. The only means of input and output were the paper tape reader, a paper tape punch, a typewriter that served as a manual input and as a printer, and the lights and pushbuttons on the front panel.

Improvements were constantly being made. The first rapid-access memory held a whopping 1024 "words". This required a truck sized cabinet filled with cathode ray tubes. Later, this was replaced by 32 units each about a foot square. Each was a frame of wires tightly woven back and forth through small magnetic "cores", which were small doughnuts about an eighth of an inch in diameter. Four tape units were added, but because of technical difficulties, the tapes were not interchangeable and thus were only used as a means of providing more storage. Card readers and punches were added, both of the rectangular and of the round hole variety.

The company was bought-out by Remington Rand

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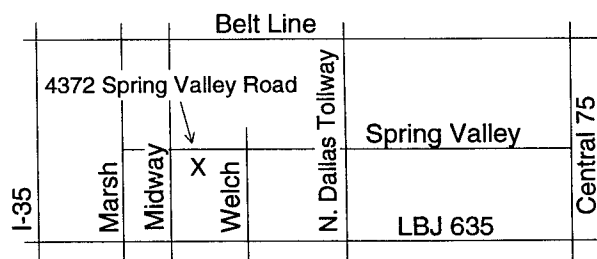
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May 8th ToasterPaint & ToasterCG

May 22nd Intro to Lightwave

June 12th Advanced Lightwave

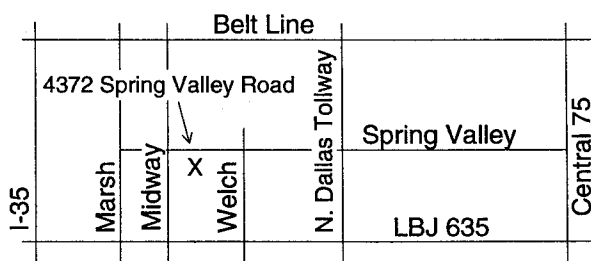
David Johnson, one of Dallas' premier animators, will be teaching a series of Toaster classes. Classes will be in Metropolitan's Multimedia Room on Saturdays from 10-5 with a break for lunch. Cost will be \$125 per session and will include a disk. Class size will be limited to 8 people, so call and make your reservation now!

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and we acquired not only a new name, UNIVAC, but also a computer line of the same name. Although the UNIVAC was obsolescent, there were a number of customers and so one was installed in the plant. This provided an endless source of amusement to us. The first step was to dig a large pit and install plumbing for water cooling. Next came an octagonal cabinet frame about the size of a kitchen. The frame was covered with narrow plug-in units each almost a yard in height. Memory was provided by a watermelon sized gadget covered with a thousand spikes, each consisting of a tube filled with mercury. Each tube was an echo chamber that held the consecutive bits of a 92 bit word in the form of a series of audio pulses. The whole central unit was covered with gray painted plywood panels. A windowed door allowed you to walk into the cabinet for repair, like walking into a supermarket meat cooler.

Power was provided by a separate cabinet that contained a long metal strip that spiralled around two porcelain posts. There were over 100 screw-tips along that strip to provide the various required voltages. This cabinet also contained hundreds of bean can sized capacitors to filter the voltages. There were hundreds of fuses and a computer controlled flash camera was mounted to take a picture of the fuses if a power failure occurred! There were ten tape units of a crude design. The tapes were solid metal, each like a large surveyor's measuring tape. Wherever a bad spot had occurred on the tape, a hole was punched so that a photoelectric cell could detect this and skip that portion of the tape. These tapes were very reliable and could be used as input and output by employing a separate typewriter-like tape device known as the Uni-Typer.

About the time that transistors were invented, the company acquired a genius by the name of Seymour Cray. This young engineer would often take the computer plans home at night and come back the next morning with an entirely new, radically improved design. Eventually, Cray joined heads with a manager named William Norris and formed a new company called Control Data. A number of people who had worked with Cray jumped ship and joined this new company. I was employee number 99 of this new venture.

At Control Data, Cray led us all on a mental rollercoaster ride. Instead of representing the computer's inner circuits by schematic and wiring diagrams, he developed a mathematical notation based upon Boolean algebra for representing all computer circuitry. His next goal was to design a little machine having about 4000 six-bit words. His staff programmed this machine to process the equations for a larger machine. Thus, the smaller machine was capable of actually simulating the larger machine before the larger machine was built! He mechanized not only the logical design, but also the choice of circuit card types, the placement of the circuit cards in the cabinets for optimum wire length, and the production of tapes for controlling the machines to string wires in the cabinets. There were new concepts never before used to such extent to design computers. New employees and the customers would ask, "Where are the logic schematics and

the wiring diagrams?" They were then handed a book consisting of thousands of equations.

Control Data took off like a rocket, both in a business sense and on the stock market. By that time, I was a programmer and became the architect of a symbolic assembler and of an early Fortran compiler. Up to that time, most programs were written in numeric form. Current Fortran compilers were slow. IBM had one that ran on their 704 and required several minutes to compile and run a certain "benchmark" program. After working around the clock for several months, our team developed a compiler that read that benchmark in Fortran, compiled it, read the program's data, processed it, and printed out the results in 15 seconds. To our surprise, we discovered that we had the world's fastest compiler!

Job jumping was in vogue in those days. Like many of my fellow workers, I was lured away into a new company called Advance Scientific Instruments. Of course, we were all going to get rich so we worked all hours of the day and night to develop a new computer and a software system. I was in charge of software. After nearly approaching bankruptcy, the company was bought out and we were all a lot wiser. In the meantime, Cray left Control Data to start Cray Research. Later, he broke off from that company to start Cray Computer. His goal was, and still is, to create the world's fastest and most powerful computer.

The last 25 years of my career were spent at Honeywell, adapting computers to the testing of aircraft controls. When I started, Honeywell's pride was a large computer housed in a glassed in front room at the Aero division. Computers were proudly displayed then. But, this was the start of the sixties. First, JFK was shot, then his brother Bobby. Next, Martin Luther King was shot and we had the Vietnam war protest, neighborhood burnings, and other signs of unrest. Somehow, computers were blamed for the world's troubles. Some were burned and bombed. Suddenly, computers had to be hidden in back rooms and had to be guarded by security personnel.

In the meantime, computers were becoming smaller, cheaper, and faster. Honeywell and other companies were finding ways to squeeze all of the intelligence of one of those monster computers onto a small silicon chip the size of your fingernail. Memory was also cheaper and we learned to talk in "megabytes" instead of "kilobytes". All this made possible a number of marvelous devices, such as a briefcase sized autopilot that could not only control an aircraft or missile, but also maintain detailed map data of where the craft had been.

Forty years ago, I used to read about computers in science fiction literature. At that time, no one realized the impact that computers would have on our lives. No one thought that they would appear in all sizes and even be used to control our automobiles. No one dreamed of personally owning a powerful computer that could talk, play music, display pictures, and even perform a real-time simulation of an aircraft in flight! Over the years, I lost interest in reading those science fiction stories about computers; instead, I was experiencing something more interesting; the real thing. ✓

Your Presence Is Requested At The **MCCC BIRTHDAY BASH**

Back in February, Bill Raecke wrote an article announcing the MCCC 10th anniversary. To that end, we will be holding our annual picnic in a park on May 22, 1993 at the Vought Recreation Complex in Grand Prairie/Arlington.

The actual location is called Corsair Park. We have a pavillion reserved from 9:30 am to 5 pm.

There will be a cookout from 11:30 am to 1:30 pm. During that time, the MCCC will supply charcoal for the barbecue grills, paper plates, cups, ice, soft drinks and maybe beer, but

that is to be decided. (Make your voice heard).

You need to bring your own meat and please bring a covered dish (potato salad, cole slaw, baked beans and the like) to share.

There are several rules that we must adhere to. No pets are allowed and no glass containers.

The map shows Corsair Park. The arrow pointing to the pavillion is where you should be.

Hope to see y'all there...Pete Goad.✓

The MCCC 10 Years Ago

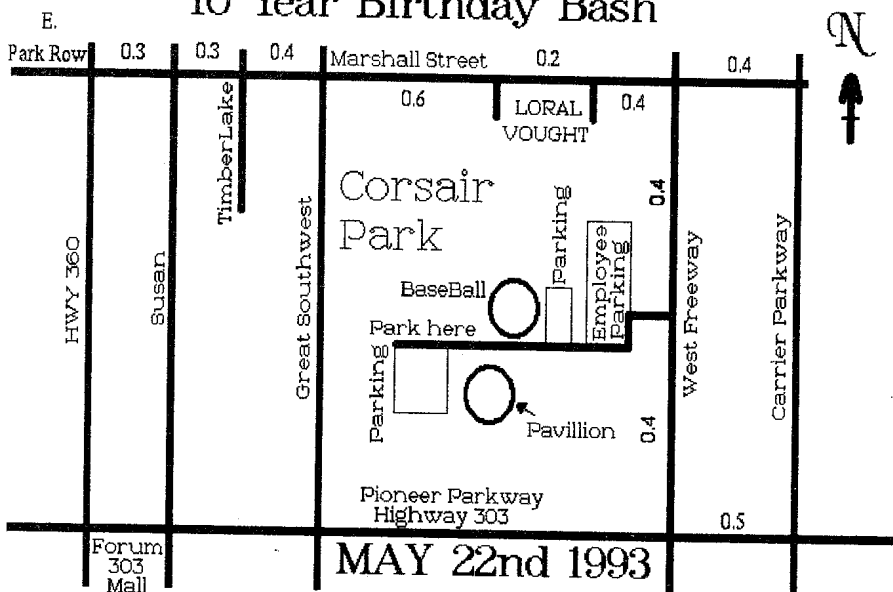
The MCCC had 140 members — 90 with C-64's, 47 with VIC-20's and 3 with PETs.

The MCCC received confirmation that members would receive a 10% discount on all regularly-priced software at all Videoland stores and at the RAVE store in Hurst.

The library copy costs were set at \$1.00 per disk to cover the costs of the mailer and \$.50 to cover postage. Mailer fees were refundable upon return of the mailer. Our librarian, David Sunkel, announced that the only way for the library material to get distributed was for members to trade among themselves. The 20 minutes per disk copy time made rapid distribution an impossibility.

Highlights of the six page newsletter were the president's notes, the April minutes, and several BASIC programs. ✓

10 Year Birthday Bash



Thought For The Month

*You can fool
some of the people
some of the time*

And that is sufficient

Amiga Library News

public domain and shareware picks
from Bill Raecke

Clipart
We have more excellent clipart this month. Not as much as last month, but it's all choice. You'll find 14 clips in *Adobe Illustrator* format on MCCC-A_518. Check 'em out.

Rotor by Markus Illenseer

Looking for a new and interesting screen blanker? Look no further. *Rotor* is a screen blanker that draws a series of dizzying patterns on the screen as it protects your monitor from burn in. This one is interesting enough that you may find yourself using it for its entertainment value. The patterns are varied and randomized so you won't find yourself watching the same thing over and over. In fact, I'm not sure that I've ever seen the same thing twice. Look for *Rotor* on MCCC-A_518.

Virus Checker v6.24 by John Veldthuis

Our favorite virus protector is now up to version 6.24. This one comes with a new interface to support some new functions, and it now works properly under AmigaOS 3.0. Version 6.23 was a major upgrade that added the ability to check crunched files for viruses. This is important because a crunched virus is virtually undetectable by most programs. If you're using anything older than 6.23 be sure to get this upgrade. It's on MCCC-A_518.

QMouse v2.40 by Dan Babcock

Another upgrade to another important program. QMouse, for those who are unfamiliar with it, is a small program that adds several important features to your Amiga including: automatic screen and window activation when a screen is brought to the front; mouse blanking; mouse acceleration, click to front and click to back; a PopCLI feature; SunMouse action; screen blanking; drive click control; and more. New in this release are the ability to do an automatic screen and window activation when the mouse is used to move a screen to the back, and the ability to make the top screen the default public screen automatically (very useful). All the options are enabled individually so it will do no more than you want it to. In my system I use just the mouse blank feature (because it works better than any other mouse blanker I have encountered), the click-to-front feature (three clicks anywhere in a window brings the window to the front — and the number of clicks is configurable), and the PubScreen option that makes the top screen the default public screen. If you've used QMouse in the past, you'll want this upgrade. If you haven't used it, it's time you gave it a try. Check it out on MCCC-A_519.

WBRun by Sylvain Rougier and Pierre Carrette

Did you ever have the need to run a program from a shell and have it act as though it had been run from the Workbench? The Workbench works a little differently than the shell. For one thing, the default directory is set to the directory from which the program was started. For another, the stack size is set by the stack size indicated by the icon. For still another, the icon's tool types are read to set some of the program's parameters. (With many 2.0 programs — particularly commodities — there are no longer shell equivalent parameters to pass to the program. Icon tool types are used exclusively.)

Well, if this need has ever arisen, here is the answer. *WBRun* can be used to activate a program from a shell or script and the program will start just as though you had clicked on its icon. The only catch is that you must include the full path name of the file. It works like a charm. It's on MCCC-A_519. (For an idea of how this program might be used, see the accompanying article on choosing a random screen blanker).

term v3.2 by Olaf Barthel

In my [humble] opinion, *term* is the best terminal package currently available on the Amiga at any price. Better still, the price of *term* is FREE! Actually, the author labels this "giftware". It's free — but you should feel "free" to make any donation you think is appropriate. *term* offers a beautiful interface along with the ability to do just about anything you could ask of a terminal program. I have connected with normal BBS's, the mainframe at work, and with PayMaster banking which requires a VT-52 emulation (no other freely distributable package has been able to manage this trick). This latest update is mostly bug fixes, but I have to report that I haven't noticed any bugs on this or previous versions. You can find *term* (in an archived condition) on MCCC-A_520 with a second version of the program designed for 68020 or greater Amigas on MCCC-A_521. The support files are only found on MCCC-A_520 so if you have an accelerated machine, you need to get both disks.

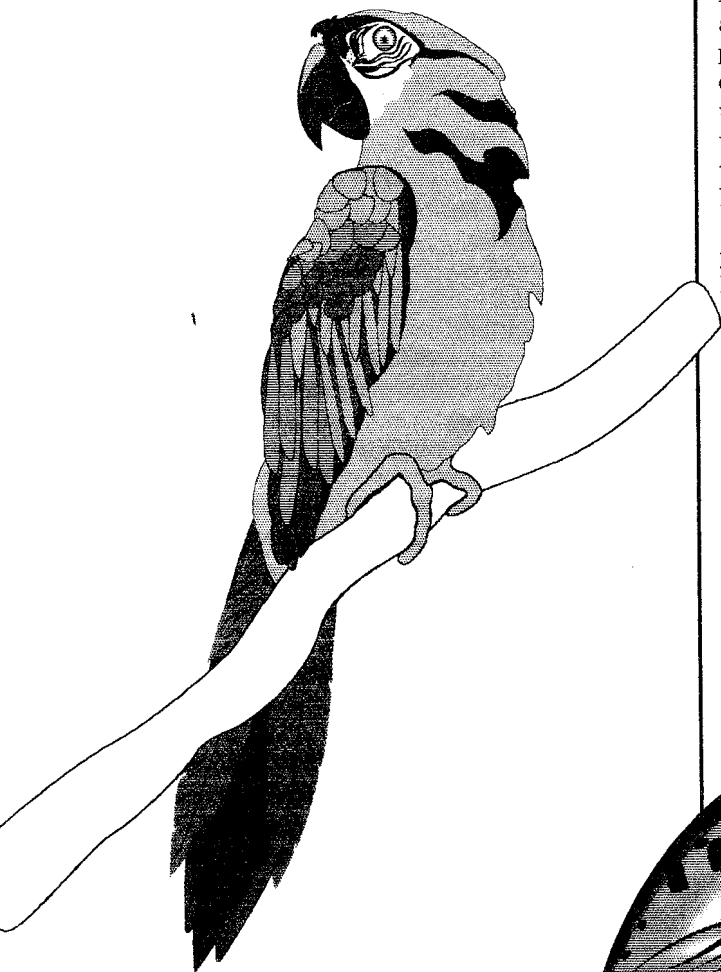
Tracker Music

Yes, we have some new tracker music this month. On MCCC-A_520 is a beautiful, quiet piece called *Adeline*; on MCCC-A_521 is an award winner from Europe called *Beyond Music*; and on MCCC-A_522 are *Bass IC Blues*, *I Like Chopin*, and *Star Trek*. This is good stuff. Check it out.

The Intel Outside (TM) Project by Session Studios

The answer to all those annoying "Intel Inside" advertisements. This beautifully done graphic tells what

we think of Intel. The (TM) stands for "Take Motorola". There is a super-bitmap, a *ProDraw* clip, and two pics designed to be used as workbench backgrounds...one for interlaced Workbenches and one for non-interlaced Workbenches. Not wanting to give up my beautiful Workbench backgrounds I came up with my own solution. I took the interlaced Workbench background picture into *Deluxe Paint*, grabbed it as a brush, reduced it in half twice, touched it up, and saved it as a brush. Then I set up *Tool Manager* to display the brush as an icon on my Workbench. The icon doesn't do anything...but maybe I can find an appropriate sound (a raspberry, perhaps?). Join the fun. Pick up MCCC-A_521. ✓



Automate

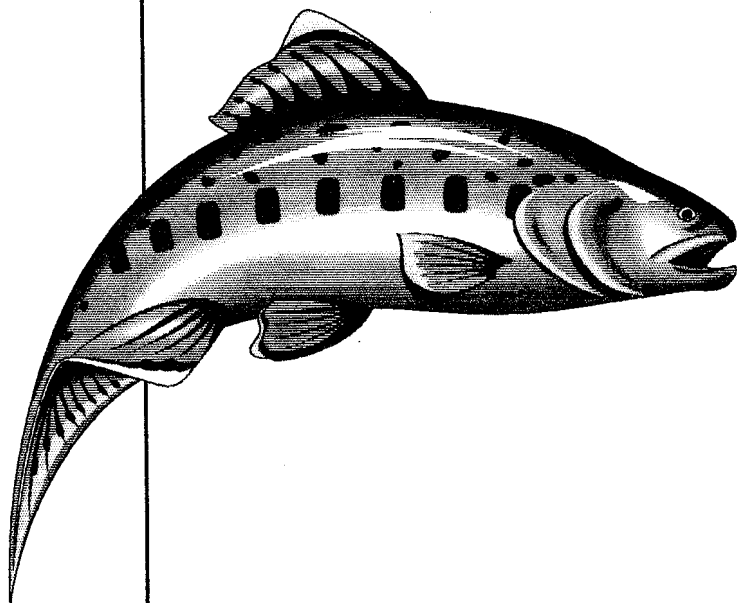
the Write Stuff menu program
Thomas D'Angelo, CCCC

I like and use the Write Stuff Menu Program (WSMP) on many of my disks. It's a nifty program as menu programs go, and it's in BASIC so it can be easily changed. It loads and prints to the screen reasonably rapidly. I have always disliked 'high falutin' menu programs that take a long time to load and display on the screen. Their fancy displays are gone in a few seconds when you select and start loading the program that you really want. Sometimes though, being as impatient and lazy as I am, even the (WSMP) takes longer than I like, and I want to do something else while it and the main program are loading. Looking at the program showed an easy modification that would load whatever program was under the highlight selector bar if no key on the keyboard was pushed for ten seconds. The program that I mostly use was put as the first program on the menu and becomes the default program.

The three lines to add or change in the MENU program AFTER you have made the menu using BB MENU MAKER are as follows:

```
900 GET A$: Q = Q + 1 : IF Q < 500 AND A$ = "" THEN 900
901 Q = 0 : IF A$ = "" THEN A$ = CHR$(13)
902 IF A$ <> CHR$(17) THEN 930
```

By modifying the program I am now able to start loading the MENU and then walk away and know that the first program will load and run without my having to push another key. ✓



Random Blankers

a practical use of WBRun
by Bill Raecke

This month's disks include a new screen blanker (*Rotor*). A new screen blanker is neat, and this is a particularly nice one, but I shouldn't have to give up all my old standbys in order to use this new one. In my system I have five blankers installed (*FracBlank*, *StarBlanker*, *ASwarm3*, *Spliner*, and *Rotor*) and one of them (*FracBlank*) is installed with four different configurations...giving me a total of eight choices. Of course, starting the blanker of my choice manually each time I booted would be a chore so I have added a randomizer to my user-startup script. This makes bootup painless and there's a certain amount of interest generated by the fact that I never know which blanker is running at any particular time.

I must admit that the original idea was not my own. Brian C. Berg wrote an ARExx program called *RxBlank* at the beginning of last year that accomplishes this quite nicely. At the time I modified it just slightly to remove a bug or two and to make the randomizing routine more random. But Brian accomplished the random startup by copying the selected blanker to the WBStartup drawer at boot time. (These blankers need to be started as Workbench applications because parameters can be passed only by the use of icon tool types.) This is effective and relatively simple but it means that you are writing to the disk each time you boot your Amiga — something that introduces a chance for an error and that adds somewhat to your hard drive fragmentation woes. A better solution is to start the blanker of your choice directly from the script, avoiding the copy process. To do this you need a program called *WBRun*, also found on this month's library disks, which simulates running a program from the Workbench or from the WBStartup drawer. What follows is the ARExx program to accomplish this little feat.

```
/*
** RXBlank v1.0 by Brian C. Berg
** 19-Jan-92
** greatly modified by Bill Raecke
**
** Selects and starts a random blanker
**
** USAGE: RX RXBlank <pathname>
*/
OPTIONS RESULTS
/* Open resssupport.library */
if ~show('L', "rexssupport.library") then do
    if ~addlib('rexssupport.library', 0,-30,0) then do
        say "RexxSupport.library not available, exiting..."
        exit 10
    end
end
```

```
/* Verify path */
/* The path should contain only blankers and matching icons */
parse arg path

IF (path = '') | (path = '?') then do
    say "USAGE: RXBlank <pathname>"
    exit
END

IF (~exists(path)) then do
    say "Can't find path "path
    exit
END

trim(path)

IF right(path, 1) ~= "/" then do
    path = path "/"
END

/* get list of blankers (and icons) and put blankers into an array */
files = showdir(path, "f")

numwords = words(files)

blcount = 0
do x = 1 to numwords
    if right(word(files,x), 5) ~= '.info' then
        do
            blcount = blcount + 1
            blanker.blcount = word(files,x)
        end
    end
end

/* Choose a random blanker */
rndnum = random(1,blcount,time('S')+date('C'))

do x=1 to 100
    rndnum = random(1,blcount)
end

Blnum = random(1,blcount)

ADDRESS COMMAND 'WBRun 'path || blanker.Blnum

EXIT
```

Now that that's taken care of, all that needs to be done is to add the command 'RX RxBlank' to your user-startup file (making sure that *RexxMast* is started before you execute your ARExx program). ✓

FinalCopy Fonts

when good companies say dumb things

by Bill Raecke

Let me start by saying that, as far as I am concerned, *FinalCopy II* from SoftWood is the best word processor available for the average user. I have no reservations at all about recommending it to anyone who asks for my opinion. Its only shortcomings lie in the areas of footnoting, indexing, and some other strictly high-end capabilities that most of us simply don't need. *FinalCopy's* strongest feature, however, has always been its output. It performs better than any other word processor available on the Amiga in that regard, using the same kind of technology that was pioneered by *PageStream* to produce the highest quality print of which your printer is capable . . . without requiring you to purchase expensive Postscript capable equipment.

But even good companies can say dumb things. I recently upgraded my *FinalCopy II* to Release 2. With the upgraded program, I received a single page documentation addendum that spelled out the improvements included. Chief among them was the ability to use Postscript Type 1 and Compugraphic fonts as well as the previously used NimbusQ fonts. In describing Compugraphic font support, the addendum¹ states: "*Although this font format is inferior to both NimbusQ and Type-1 in speed, flexibility, file size, appearance, and PostScript compatibility, it nonetheless has been forced upon Amiga users as the 'standard' for the Amiga. ... If you intend to print a document to a Postscript printer, do not use Compugraphic fonts. This limitation is due to the poor Postscript compatibility inherent in the Compugraphic font format.*" All this would be fine if any of it were true. It's not. Or at least it's very misleading.

The first thing to get out of the way is the question of Postscript compatibility. Is Compugraphic less compatible with Postscript printers than Postscript fonts? Probably. Does it matter? Not a bit. It may be true that *FinalCopy* has a problem sending a Compugraphic font to a Postscript printer . . . but that is, by no means, a universal problem. *PageStream* handles it quite nicely. It is true that, when using *PageStream*, a Compugraphic font sent to a Postscript printer will not produce quite as clean an output at small sizes. And it's also true that I haven't sent any output from *FinalCopy* to a Postscript printer for comparison. But that's the whole point isn't it? The reason to own *FinalCopy* is to be able to print Postscript equivalent output without owning a Postscript printer. If we all had Postscript printers, we'd all be using *ProWrite* which is at least an equivalent product (perhaps better in some respects) except for the print capabilities.

FinalCopy also criticizes Compugraphic fonts as being slower. I found that interesting, since in *PageStream* Compugraphic fonts are noticeably faster. Tests with *FinalCopy* have shown that Compugraphic fonts are quicker here too. Interesting. Regarding file

size . . . yes, Compugraphic fonts are larger. Regarding flexibility . . . I'm not sure what that means.

But the most important feature to look for is the quality of the type, both on the screen and on the printed page. SoftWood would have us believing that Compugraphic fonts should be avoided at all costs. Now, with *PageStream*, which font is best depends on your output device. Both Compugraphic and Postscript font contain "hints." All that means is that if the output device uses the built in "hints" that the font will look cleaner at small point sizes. *PageStream* will use the hints built into Compugraphic fonts when printing to a non-Postscript printer. A Postscript printer will use the hints built into a Postscript font when that font is sent to the printer. Since most of us don't have a Postscript printer, we should use Compugraphic fonts when possible, at least for body text (small point sizes), when using *PageStream*. How about when using *FinalCopy*? Of course, there's just one way to find out. Test them.

You're looking at the results. This page of the newsletter was produced with *FinalCopy* except for the footer and the title. The font used in this case was Century Schoolbook, the font I ordinarily use to produce the MCCC News. There are seven paragraphs. The first three paragraphs are printed with the Compugraphic version of this font. The Compugraphic produces copy that is superior to either of the others. It prints very cleanly and is very easy on the eyes. Paragraphs four and five are printed using the NimbusQ version of the font. It, too, prints very cleanly, although the design is not quite as good as the Compugraphic font (look at the "m" in "Compugraphic"). But either of these is acceptable. Now, take a close look at the text you are currently trying to read. The last two paragraphs were printed with the Postscript version of Century Schoolbook. Having trouble reading? You should be able to see a very distinct difference here. Stroke widths vary and the base line moves up and down. This becomes even more pronounced at more standard sizes...10 to 12 points. (This is 9 point text.) The print quality that *FinalCopy* produces using a Postscript font is clearly inferior to the other two . . . a *FinalCopy*, not a Postscript problem. (By the way, the results of the Postscript font on the screen are even worse. I had to zoom in to write this text.) Some people have told me that they see little difference. If that is the case, use whatever suits you. Dealing with this newsletter for the past several years has probably made me more critical than most. But SoftWood certainly should have noticed the difference.

My final score regarding the use of the various font types in *FinalCopy* with a standard printer is: Compugraphic fonts in first place, NimbusQ in second, and Postscript trailing a VERY poor third. And the moral of this article is: don't believe everything you read.

Beyond Graphics

printers, drivers, fonts, and going to bed

by Chris Ferree of the Tampa Bay Amiga Group

It was a dark and stormy night... Actually, I don't even plug my computer in on stormy nights. But, then, did you ever see a mystery story start, "It was a bright and clear night."? I had just returned from a local office supply warehouse with my new, 24-pin printer. If you remember from my last column, I mentioned I was working with an antique — a 9-pin, Star Micronics Gemini-10X printer. You can actually see the dots in the numbers and letters. It just wouldn't do for me to write my award winning articles with that printer. So, it was off to purchase my second printer. "Now!", I told myself, "I would be cooking."

I already had an A-B switch box because I had attached both my Amiga and my Commodore 64 to the same old printer. Since I don't use my C-64 any more, I decided maybe I could use the switch box to attach two printers to my Amiga. Back to the office supply store for another cable, but because I needed a male plug on both ends and it had to be the Amiga printer type, I was required to purchase a sex-change adapter. Ouch! This must hurt those cables.

I attached all cables, loaded form feed labels in the old printer, and regular paper in the new printer. I loaded my data base program and ran off some address labels on my 9-pin printer. I decided I would leave this printer with labels loaded all the time. It ran very smoothly as usual. The quality of print on the mailing labels is readable, but does not require the near letter quality of the 24-pin printer. I then decided to load my word processor and print a document. I switched the switch box to the new printer. I loaded a document, and pressed print. Nothing!

I decided that the first thing to do was to check the cables. I switched the cables on the box, and tried again. This time my printer started printing, but the print looked like it was in a foreign language. "STOP!", I told myself. "There must be something else I must do." I then remembered — I must change the printer driver. I looked in the print section of my word processing program. "Oh, darn!", I said (right!). There was no printer driver for my new printer listed (I need a KX-P1124i driver). "What to do? What to do?!" I then went to my printer manual, and found a section which listed some alternative drivers that I could use if I did not have the specific one for my printer. Epson LQ-850 was choice three, and Epson LQ Series was choice four. I found this in my word processor's printer library, and added it to my "selected" printers. I also found an Epson Q driver on the Extras Disk for the 1.3 workbench, and I loaded it into Preferences on my Workbench Disk.

They work okay, but I have been told by Pete Baker, TBAG BBS Sysop, that he has the specific driver for my printer, and that he would bring it to me at the first

meeting in May. Later, when we went to copy it at the meeting, we discovered that it had disappeared from his disk (the plot sickens!). He said he would look for it and get me a copy later.

Meanwhile, back at the ranch (or my house), I still had the problem with the switch box not working. I tried all the cables without the box and they all worked, so I knew it was not the cables. I tried all with the common plug and the "B" switch, and they worked. When I used the "A" plug, they did not work. A friend who works on computers and other equipment brought his meter and other tools to my house. After some testing and working with the switch, BINGO! — it worked. Now I was cooking. I placed my new printer in the place of honor, on my printer cart, so it could accept the form feed paper, and my old printer on top of my desk, so I could keep labels in it all the time. OOPS!, this was not going to work. I had no place to put the labels. Now, it was back to the office supply store to purchase a cheap printer stand for \$6.43, plus tax. I then placed the labels under the printer, and was ready to roll.

So, now, I am all ready to use BOTH of my printers! At work I use word processors and the *Lotus 1-2-3* spreadsheet program all the time. With these programs, and others, you can have different type sizes and faces. Many people at my work are confused with the terminology, and so maybe a few of you are also. The type you see is measured by its height and width; that is, so many characters per inch (CPI) horizontally across the page. Ten CPI is normally called "Pica" type and 12 CPI is known as "Elite" type. This horizontal measurement is called the type pitch. The height of the type size is based on "the point system," established in 1837 by a French printer named Fournier, which is the system used today, with slight modifications. One inch high is equal to 72 points. So, for example, if you see a type size that is 36 points, it is equal to one-half inch. The larger the point size, the wider the type will be.

The type face is the design of the type. Some type faces are rounded. Some are straight with squared ends. Some have tails or serifs at the end of each letter (like most of the type in this newsletter). This combination of sizes, design, and style of a given type is called the font. There are many different fonts available. You need to determine your purpose, whether it be for letter writing, desktop publishing, desktop video, graphics, slides, or whatever before you decide which fonts to purchase. Scan your local newspaper, carefully read your TBAG RAG (a name I feel should remain and not be changed — there is a story to how and why that name was picked. I know. I was there!), observe your television, watch those movies, just explore how different fonts are used, and which ones

seem to work better in different situations.

Just a side note here for crossword puzzle and *Scrabble* lovers, there is a two-letter word "Em", which is a type size in which the height and width are the same size. This came about because the capital letter "M" usually fits that description. Now, the companion to that is the word "En", which is half an "Em". Watch those fellow *Scrabble* players try to challenge you on those words — and lose!

So, having delved even deeper into my past, to dig up information about printing, I guess it is time to put this article — and myself — to bed. Putting an issue of a newspaper to bed is the term used to indicate all pages have been closed: the type set, and all pages laid out and ready to go to press. There is no sexual harassment intended at all. And, considering I worked late at night putting out a morning newspaper, at 3:00 a.m. in the morning I was READY to put myself to bed. If anyone else has questions to the mysteries of printing or clues to the answers, see me at most TBAG meetings. ✓

ATTENTION

The following equipment was stolen

Amiga 2000 ... s/n JA 1025304 with 2.0 ROM
2 floppies — A2320 Video card
2 Quantum hard-drives (40mb & 50 mb)
Microbotics Hardframe 2000
Supra RAM expansion w/4mb

Call Randy Pletzer — 214-224-3363 — with any info

These Dealers offer discounts to
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membership card

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Dallas, Texas 75229
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ANSOFT Data Systems

Amiga Software & Hardware
2801 W. 7th Street
Fort Worth, Texas 76107
(817) 870-2529

Metropolitan Computer

Amiga Software, Hardware & Repair
4372 Spring Valley
Dallas, Texas 75244
(214) 702-9119

TAMING GEOS

making a GEOS boot disk
by Eric Novell, Suncoast Monitor

Many experienced GEOS users still use the BSW System disk to boot GEOS. When using a 1571 or 1581 drive in your system, this just doesn't make sense. If you create a boot disk on a 1571 or 1581 format disk, you will have a setup that will load faster, and have more GEOS programs ready to use.

Making a new boot disk isn't as hard as many would think. You don't need to be a programmer to accomplish this feat either. The easiest solution is to buy a copy of *Maverick*, for its GEOS Toolkit. *Maverick* has so many other uses, every Commodore user should have it anyway. What *Maverick* will do for the GEOS user is create a boot disk on either a 3 1/2 inch (1581) disk or on a 1571 double sided disk.

You **MUST** have a legal copy of GEOS for this program to work, so there is nothing even remotely wrong (copyright wise) with the new boot disks. *Maverick* makes creating the new boot disk so easy, anyone who can read can do it with ease. *Maverick* is well known for its ability to create a 1581 boot disk, but many are not aware of the ability to create true 1571 format boot disks. However, there is no "trick" to this at all. Just use a 1571 instead of a 1581, and the program will do the rest.

When *Maverick* finishes creating your new boot disk, you will have a disk with one file on it. The disk is not even in GEOS format yet. When the new boot is made, remove it from the drive, and boot GEOS from your old system disk, as usual. When GEOS has booted, close the system disk and remove it. Then place the new boot disk into the drive and open it. You will see the "Not a GEOS disk window" message. Click on "yes" to convert it to the GEOS format. Now file copy the files you want on your new boot disk. You must have:

- Desktop 2.0
- Configure 2.0
- Input driver (mouse, etc)
- Printer driver
- Preference manager
- Pad color manager

Now you have room for all of those neat auto exec files that make life easier in GEOS, like *DBgetfile*, *Blankit*, or *GeoWizard*. You will have plenty of room for *GeoWrite*, *GeoPaint*, *Photo* and *Text Managers* and *Fonts* galore. ✓

CHAPTER NEWS

Amiga By-The-Loop

Pete Goad

The April Loop meeting was treated to a demonstration of Commodore's AGA machines...in this instance an A4000 machine courtesy of David Marshall and Metropolitan Computers.

David Owens (now clean shaven?) welcomed everybody to the April meeting and proceeded immediately to the club announcements, the most important of these being the picnic in the park on May 22nd. (See section elsewhere in this newsletter.) Other announcements included the now obligatory expired memberships and also a serious chastisement to Okley for bringing his PC portable to the meeting! This month also started a donation to Fred Fish for his outstanding work to the Amiga community as a whole.

The Q & A session that followed was started with questions about mouse button switches and their failures. A strange rumor concerning an A5000 was squashed before the speaker could even get all of the details out!

At last we got to the A4000 machine that had been running a demo of various ham8 and other new screen modes at the front of the meeting. David started off by telling us about the new machines that Commodore has just released. The A4000-030 which is basically an A3000 with the AGA chipset, has a 25MHz 68030 & 68882 4 Meg of FAST RAM, 2 Meg of CHIP and a 120 MByte hard drive. Price around \$1980.

David then began showing off the different video modes of the A4000 using DPaint IV AGA. An impressive performance by any machine. However writing the results here is a little tough! David then showed an *AmigaVision* presentation showing off the A4000

and followed this up with an amazing *SCALA Professional* demonstration. The only problem I have is how to convey all of this visual information to you, so I will not even try. However, I will add my usual "You should have been there!"

Amiga By-The-Loop would like to extend our thanks to David for his excellent presentation on all aspects of the new AGA machines.

Now, as has become a regular feature?...

What's the loop doing next month section?

The next Amiga-By-The-Loop presentation will hopefully be a demonstration of a full color 24 bit scanner and how you can use it.

Well, that's it for this month. We hope to see you at our next meeting of the Amiga By-The-Loop.

Amiga Central

Johnny Kitchens

Our meeting of the month began on a sad note...memberships that were expiring at the end of the month. The loss of even one fellow member is a sad moment for everyone at Central. Things cheered up as we discussed the up and coming picnic. Hopefully things will improve this year for our annual event. The weather has been very unkind to it in the past. Maybe the choice of a new location, located near one of our nation's largest manufacturer's operations will make a difference. The B-2 bomber took form not far from this location. It will be worth the trip in more ways than one.

Next we took up donations for what some believe is our best reason yet. Fred Fish has been in trouble in the past few months, and maybe our donation will help out and show our thanks for the effort he has made. From here we moved to the question and answer section of the meeting. Our first asked what is AWESOME?

Although apparently there is no clear cut answer to this question, one description might be a buying club. If you need to know more, call a board called Freejacks. Its number is (817) 831-3942.

Another question concerned virus checkers. I believe that Virus Checker stands as one of the best. The current version, 6.24, is available on the club BBS. One advantage of this one over the others is the constant updating, almost monthly. The next question seemed to get a lot of people talking — what to do to get SCSI on the 1200. Seems that won't be much of a problem for long as several manufacturers are rushing to get one out.

With this talk we were led into the rumors talk of our meeting. *PageStream 3.0* was first and deserves to be. *PageStream*, already a great program, appears to be about to enter a new level of greatness. I know I'm ready to have it now. It was pointed out that *Deluxe Paint IV* can load 24 bit images though it isn't mentioned anywhere. It's always great to discover that a program has a hidden talent. If you discover one, come on out to a meeting and mention it.

Does everyone know that the 4000-030 is in stock at Metropolitan? If their sales are as brisk as the previous AGA machines, that may not be true by the time you read this. 4000T news was going around. It has been shown — and what a machine it sounds to be. Just the two video slots make it sound outstanding. At the same time the 4091 SCSI controller was shown, only the rumor is that the Super Buster chip in the 4000 is giving them fits. Could be the reason for the delay of the controllers.

Finally we went to the main presentation. Harold Williams showed us the latest version of *Final Copy II Release 2*. *Final Copy* shows the current trend in word processors to get more like desktop publishers.

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They offer many of the features found in desktop publishers while offering easier text manipulation...though not as easy in some ways. *Final Copy's* strongest feature is the output to the printer. For a long time *Final Copy* used its own outline fonts called Nimbus Q. It appears that they are the only ones using these fonts. It apparently worked for them as the output looks really good.

Well the main new feature for this version of *Final Copy* is its ability to use Compugraphic fonts. While its use of these fonts is slower in operation, it does open the doors to new fonts not previously available. Harold passed around samples of *Final Copy's* output, and many agreed it was of the highest quality. Seeing a difference between the two types of fonts was all but impossible for the same font. One note of interest on the new version was the date. If you have a version earlier than Feb. 25, 1993 then you may want an update, as a bug in the font handling may be present. My final thought is, if you want a word processor with some desktop publishing capabilities and output that's great, then take a look at *Final Copy II Release 2*. You won't be

disappointed!

And coming next month...the Amiga Central meeting on May 20th will feature a presentation of *Alien Craft* by Scott Lamb. *Alien Craft* is a state of the art multi-media educational program, incorporating NTSC quality graphics, digitized sound and motion video. If you've wondered what multi-media is all about, this presentation is for you.

Amiga North Dallas

Genny White

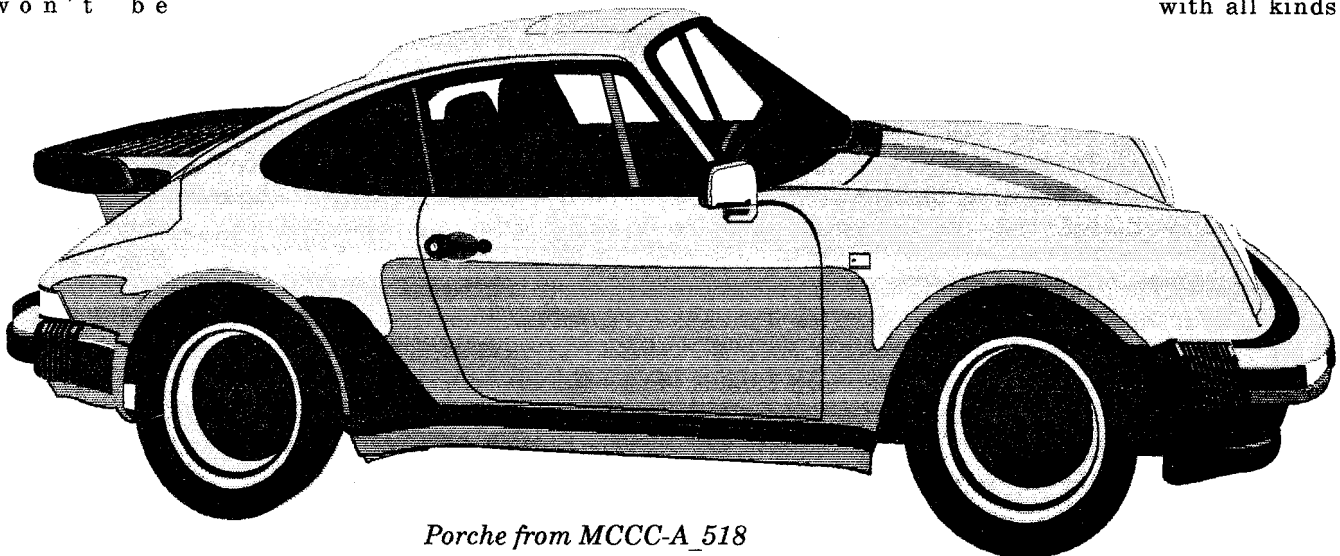
It's a drag writing about a great meeting when you didn't get to be there... I had to miss the April meeting due to another commitment, so I owe thanks to Danny Barnett and Gus Reiter for passing on the news to me. I may miss the May meeting, but I should be back in June for sure. Anybody wanna play secretary for a month? I do hope I'll see all of you at the picnic... assuming we aren't rained out AGAIN!

I'm told that due to a paperwork snafu, we had to relocate our meeting into a little bitty space

again, but only started a few minutes late after things were reshuffled. Hopefully things will be back to normal next month. The biggest news item at the meeting was about the new Toasters: the Toaster 3.0 for the A2000, and the newer 4.0 Toaster Board for the A4000. The latter was just premiered at the NAB (National Association of Broadcasters) Convention, where our own Brett Hester was attending. Hope for a report from Brett on how things were received there.

Also mentioned at our gathering was a new Emplant board that offers a "reasonable color Mac emulation" (256 colors in hi-res), letting you run Mac color software. Another notice of Things To Come *PageStream 3.0*, with "everything everyone has been asking for", compared by some to the *Quark Express* package on the Mac.

Our President Himself (Danny Barnett) presented to us the *Virtual Reality Studio* from Domark. He brought the official demo video tape, then, after the video, ran through the sample Studio game that comes with the disk and played around with some of the nifty features. Picture a tool that enables you to build your own 3-D world to play in, with all kinds



Porsche from MCCC-A_518

CHAPTER NEWS

of shapes and colors to design your environment. Now add "sensors" that react to your passage and can transport you...well, elsewhere...like a well-oiled Tardis. [← obscure Dr. Who fan reference here.] Gus observed that, with a lot of shapes to manipulate, the speed reminded him of some of the early flight simulators: a little slow but not too distracting. I'm gonna bribe Danny with a dinner and get him to show off his Wonderful Toy to me and my family, and then I can tell you more.

Yes, there were doorprizes, even though I wasn't there to claim one! Metropolitan contributed *Renegade*, *Tiger Road*, and *Matrix Marauders*; Danny brought *Pushover*, and Gus offered *City Desk 2.0*.

As Brett is still out at this writing, I can't tell you what's up for the May meeting. Come be surprised! In all the years we've been a chapter I've never been bored, and I've always learned something useful. If you don't feel that way, or you have a topic you wish we would discuss, please let your officers know. See you at the picnic!

Amiga West Ben Clingerman

At our April meeting Eddie Monjay demonstrated Soft-Logik's *TypeSmith*. *TypeSmith* is a full featured outline font editor and font design program. The program allows you to create Postscript, Compugraphic or Soft Logik outline fonts. You can also import Soft Logik's Art Expression's structured objects and use them as fonts or dingbats etc. Eddie also demonstrated *Ami-Back*, a hard drive back-up and optimizer program. I demonstrated New Horizon's *ProWrite* word processor which I think is a very good beginner's word processor. Ansoft donated three Amiga coffee mugs for

door prizes. Thank you as always, Jerry.

Next month's meeting, May 13th, will be in room 638 in the main building at TCOM due to the nature of our meeting. John Belyeu is going to demo Pocket Radio and he needs to be able to get a good signal, so we're going up on the 6th floor to try our best and get one. I don't know much about this subject but I hear it has something to do with hooking into your computer and using it as some sort of Ham Radio transceiver. This is going to be very interesting so be sure and join us.

Have a Amiga Day!

Fort Worth Brenda Sessums

Hello, world!

We had 14 happy, exciting people at our April meeting and had a blast, as usual. Phil Heberer gave us a demo and explanation of CPM for those of us new to the CPM environment. It was real interesting, but since a lot of us had never used CPM, we didn't know what questions to ask. All we knew is that we wanted to learn more. You might check his article in the March newsletter. Thanks, Phil!

Our vice president, John Burk had two fun games and a utility to show us. The Pinball Game on Disk #342 was a lot of fun and easy to play. Then John showed an adventure Game from Disk #355, *The Lost Crown of Queen Anne*, and everyone got into the quest. "Gee, it's dark down here, what now?", John would say. Then someone else would say, "light the stick", then someone else would say, "use the oily rag on the stick." One of the neatest things about it was that it was self-mapping! Approximate playing time is 90 minutes...ha, ha!

John also showed us a measurement converter from Disk #353. James Dunnam shed light on

what some of the measurements meant and how they came about (cubits, length of chain, etc.). Maybe we could make money with this doing surveys and converting the information?

There is a new newsletter & magazine for our Commodore 64/128 machines called "dieHard, the flyer for 8bitters." There is a review of this magazine in the February issue of "Compute, Gazette." We passed around information on it at the March meeting. Here is the address for those of you who missed it: dieHard, Subscriptions, P.O. Box 392, Boise, ID 83701.

Ok, here's the soapbox section: In this world and this universe there are still thousands, maybe millions of Commodore eight-bit owners who still use and enjoy their computers and will probably be buried with them (myself and this group included!). Commodore, are you listening?! We have no support...no hardware support...no software support...no magazine! Tandy still supports the CoCos and Trash 80s with a magazine. Well? Are we nothing, just a stepping stone for a large corporation? A group used and abused and just cast aside? Despite your lack of concern, we will be around until only one person and one machine still breathes!

Well, enough of that. Here's a new BBS to try out: (817) 268-2204. The SYSOP is Bob Wolverton. Give him a call!

Don't forget our SPECIAL MEETING with Brad and Bobby from Commodore Country (tm) on May 11 from 7-9 p.m. in TCOM room 540. Y'all come, ya hear?

We will still have our regular meeting on May 8 in room 506. Don't forget to bring an Infocom game and a music disk and player. We will probably set up the babies to play music while we watch demos and play the Infocom games on the other machines! Bye for now.

The Fine Print

The Metroplex Commodore Computer Club

Statement of Purpose: The Metroplex Commodore Computer Club is a not-for-profit organization devoted to the collection and dissemination of computer knowledge, to the encouragement of computer education, and to the use of Commodore computers in the home, at school, and in business.

Legal Stuff: The MCCC is not connected with Commodore Business Machines, Inc. Commodore and Commodore product names (PET, CBM, VIC, C64, C128, and Amiga) are registered trademarks of Commodore, Inc.

Meetings and Membership: Our meetings are open to all. Family membership dues are \$24 per year or \$15 for six months, and entitle the member to a monthly mailed copy of the MCCC News, free access to the club's extensive public domain and shareware software library, and discounts at many area merchants. An additional \$12 annual fee provides access to the MCCC multi-user Bulletin Board System.

The MCCC News

Copyright Information: Material printed in the MCCC News is not copyrighted unless so noted. Articles may be reprinted or otherwise distributed by other user groups or by individuals who may find it helpful as long as proper credit is given to the author and to the MCCC.

Advertising: The MCCC News accepts two kinds of advertising. Member ads are those which are submitted by a member and which are not of a commercial nature. There is no charge for member ads. Commercial ads are those which advertise multiple like items for sale. Rates for camera-ready commercial ads are as follows for a single month or (prepaid consecutive three months): Full Page — \$36 (\$96); Half Page — \$18 (\$48); Quarter Page — \$12 (\$32); Business Card — \$6 (\$16). Materials to be inserted will cost \$.08 per copy (duplication not included) and must be inserted into all newsletters for the month.

Articles: Members are encouraged to submit articles. Articles may be submitted as ASCII text or in Amiga *excellence!*, *ProWrite*, *WordPerfect* or *Final Copy* format. They may be uploaded to the MCCC BBS, to StarText, or submitted on disk. If these methods are not possible, I will, as a last resort, accept printed articles. If graphics need to be included they may be submitted as IFF files, DR2D, *PageStream* or *Art Expressions* structured drawings, *Professional Draw* clips or, again as a last resort, printed output.

Deadline: The deadline for submissions to the MCCC News is 7am of the fourth Saturday of each month. Payment must accompany all ad copy. Make checks payable to MCCC and mail c/o Bill Raecke, 2614 Charolais Way, Arlington, Texas 76017.

Extra Copies: Extra Copies of the MCCC News are available at \$1 per copy. Orders should be forwarded with the required fee by the regular newsletter deadline.

Normal Meeting Schedule

1st Saturday	MCCC Board of Directors
2nd Tuesday	Amiga By-The-Loop Chapter
2nd Tuesday	Arlington/Grand Prairie Chapter
2nd Thursday	Amiga West Chapter
2nd Saturday	Fort Worth Chapter
2nd Saturday	Arlington/Grand Prairie Workshop
3rd Wednesday	Amiga North Dallas Chapter
3rd Thursday	Amiga Central Chapter

SIGS

VidSIG Chuck Johnson 817-478-7313

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Past President	Ray Howard	214-660-4819

MCCC BBS Numbers

(METRO @ 14,400 BAUD)	817-268-4191
(METRO @ 14,400 BAUD)	817-268-4196

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Librarian	Stephen Burt	817-441-8115

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

May 1 MCCC Board of Directors
10:00 am — N.Richland Hills Community Center
Loop 820 at Rufe Snow, N.Richland Hills

May 8 Fort Worth Chapter
1:30 pm — Texas College of Osteopathic Medicine
Lancaster & Camp Bowie, Fort Worth

May 11 Amiga By-The-Loop Chapter
7:30 pm — N.Richland Hills Community Center
Loop 820 at Rufe Snow, N.Richland Hills

May 11 Arlington/Grand Prairie Chapter
6:30 pm — Check with officer for location
This meeting may be re-located

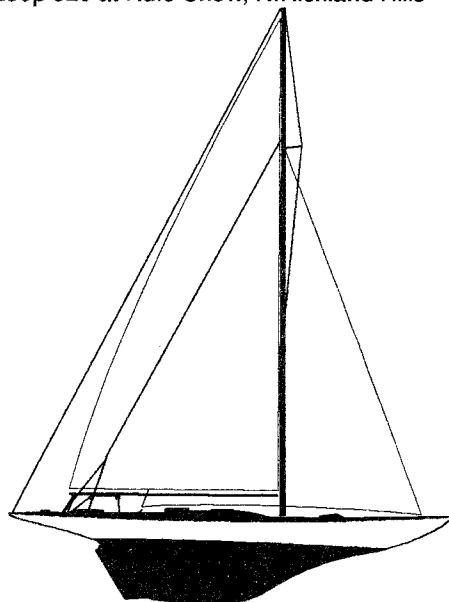
May 13 Amiga West Chapter
7:30 pm — Texas College of Osteopathic Medicine
Lancaster & Camp Bowie, Fort Worth

May 15 Amiga Beginner Class
10:00 am — Metropolitan Computer Products
4372 Spring Valley, Dallas

May 19 Amiga North Dallas Chapter
7:30 pm — Richardson Civic Center
411 West Arapaho, Richardson

May 20 Amiga Central Chapter
7:30 pm — Arlington Community Center
2800 S. Center, Arlington

June 5 MCCC Board of Directors
10:00 am — N.Richland Hills Community Center
Loop 820 at Rufe Snow, N.Richland Hills



From MCCC-A_518

June Newsletter Deadline — 7am, May 22

MCCC NEWS

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